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PAUL D. TONKO

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
20TH DISTRICT, NEW YORK

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE

RANKING MEMBER, SUBCOMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT,
MANUFACTURING, AND CRITICAL MATERIALS

SUBCOMMITTEE ON ENERGY, CLIMATE, AND GRID SECURITY

SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE, SPACE,
AND TECHNOLOGY

September 21, 2026

Laura Mitchell
President
Akima Infrastructure Protection, LLC
2553 Dulles View Dr. Suite 700
Herndon, VA 20171

Dear President Mitchell:

I am writing today to inquire about the details of a federal contract that Akima Infrastructure Protection, LLC, was awarded on August 28, 2026.¹ This contract, which is for the construction and operation of an expansion at the Buffalo Federal Detention Facility in Batavia, New York, was awarded to your organization after ICE ignored the statutorily required minimum of 15 days of public notice for federal contracts. ICE made the determination that “only Akima Infrastructure Protection, LLC can meet the requirement in the required timeframe without unacceptable risk to ERO operations.”² Your operation of this facility, where ICE has detained many of my constituents, is of great interest to me and the people that I represent in New York’s 20th Congressional District.

Following ICE’s announcement of this expansion, I visited the Buffalo Federal Detention Facility on August 3, 2026.³ My questions about the construction timeline, structure details, and expansion capabilities went largely unanswered. Additionally, beyond a statement from ICE that indicated that it will operate “in accordance with applicable National Detention Standards,”⁴ basic details of this expansion have not been provided to me and my office. Given your use of taxpayer dollars for this project, I am asking that you provide clarity and transparency regarding the expansion of this facility.

¹ <https://sam.gov/workspace/contract/opp/f78a73b0fd3542f3a3fab93f59bae8d0/view>

² *ibid*

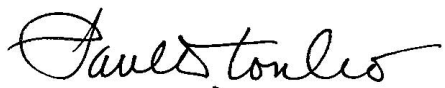
³ <https://www.timesunion.com/news/article/ice-activity-capital-region-increasing-22381651.php>

⁴ <https://nysfocus.com/2026/07/09/ice-buffalo-detention-facility-expansion-batavia>

1. Are the costs to construct and operate the expansion of this facility included in your current contract with ICE?
2. Has the construction of this facility begun and what is the full construction timeline?
3. Have you completed the environmental review for this planned expansion?
4. What does “hard-sided” mean? Will these structures be able to safely house detainees during a Buffalo winter? If yes, provide relevant data to back this assertion. Have you developed an emergency winterization plan?
5. Will the facility be for temporary or permanent lodging of detained individuals? What is the expected sleeping arrangement? Will detainees be provided individual sleeping quarters? Will the bathrooms in the facility have running water? Will this facility be equipped with air conditioning and heating?
6. What are the expected staffing requirements for this facility? Is it expected that additional staff will be needed?
7. Please send my office the information you provided ICE that led them to make the determination that they could ignore the statutorily required minimum 15-day window for contract awards.
8. Please provide a list of any other contracts that you have been awarded for construction projects for the federal government within the last 5 years. Please include the project location, the facility type, the awarding agency and the project completion date.

You are working on behalf of an agency whose practices and standards have been appalling. You are utilizing taxpayer dollars to carry out the mission of an Administration that has operated with little regard for human life and dignity and has repeatedly refused to cooperate with lawful Congressional oversight. I request that you provide the relevant materials to respond to my questions before September 30, 2026, so that this matter can be properly addressed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul D. Tonko". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Paul" and last name "Tonko" clearly distinguishable.

Paul D. Tonko
Member of Congress